Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1-2. These sheets replace the original sheets including Figs. 1-2.

In Figs. 1 and 2 handwritten reference numbers have been replaced with typewritten numbers.

In Fig. 1 duplicate reference number 40C has been corrected to 40B. Additionally, a border has been added to the left side of the outer ring.

In Fig. 2 a border has been added to the left side and to the right side of the outer ring

REMARKS

I. 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3, 18-20 and 35-37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,158,021 to Matsui et al. For the reasons set forth below, applicant disputes the examiner's position.

"Anticipation requires the disclosure in a single prior art reference disclosure of each and every element of the claimed invention, arranged as in the claim." Lindemann Maschinenfabrik GmbH v. American Hoist & Derrick Co., 730 F.2d 1452, 221 USPQ 481, 485 (Fed. Cir. 1984) (citing Connell v. Sears, Roebuck & Co., 722 F.2d 1542, 220 USPQ 193 (Fed. Cir. 1983)).

Independent claims 1 and 35 recite at least one or more support arms extending radially relative to a central stationary hub; means for driving said support arms in a generally circular path relative to said central stationary hub; and means for unloading and loading one or more of said passenger units uncoupled from said support arms while said support arms move in said generally circular path. Claim 18 recites similar limitations. Accordingly, the members supporting the passenger units extend radially relative to a central stationary hub. It is this configuration that allows unloading and loading of passengers without stopping the apparatus and altering the forces on passengers by moving the passenger units along the radially extending members.

Matsui fails to disclose 1) one or more support arms extending radially relative to a central stationary hub; 2) means for driving said one or more support arms about the central stationary hub; and 3) means for unloading and loading one or more of said passenger units uncoupled from said support arms while said support arms move in said generally circular path. The ski lift of Matsui has no central stationary hub or support arms extending radially therefrom. Moreover, with Matsui, unloading and loading of passengers is accomplished while all chairs are moving or stopped. In other words, there is no means for unloading and loading uncoupled chairs while the remaining chairs continue to move. Indeed, the lift chairs of Matsui can only be removed by stopping the entire system.

As Matsui fails to disclose 1) one or more support arms extending radially relative to

a central stationary hub; 2) means for driving said one or more support arms about the central stationary hub; and 3) means for unloading and loading one or more of said passenger units uncoupled from said support arms while said support arms move in said generally circular path, Matsui cannot anticipate independent claims 1, 18 and 35 and thus cannot anticipate dependent claims 2, 3, 19, 20, 36 or 37.

II. 35 U.S.C. §103

a. Claims 4, 21 and 29-31

Claims 4, 21 and 29-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsui et al. For the reasons set forth below, applicant disputes the examiner's position.

Applicant incorporates herein by reference the section 102 arguments from above to support his position that Matsui does not render claims 4, 21 and 29-31 obvious.

Ski lifts operate by moving all lift chairs simultaneously with loading and unloading being accomplished in most instances while all chairs are moving. That is, skiers stand in a designated location awaiting the lift chairs arrival at which time they sit down and are transported to the top of the mountain. In some instances, for example when a person is in jeopardy of injury, the lift chairs are all stopped. However, all chairs are either moving or stopped. There is simply no basis to state that it would have been obvious to incorporate a rotatable clutch into the Matsui ski lift system. First, there is no reason to do so. Second, the rotatable clutch of the present invention functions in conjunction with the support arms which rotate relative to a central stationary hub. Applicant is at a loss to visualize why or how such a clutch system would be implemented into the Matsui ski lift system.

Claims 29-31 recite moving passenger units farther and closer to a central stationary hub to vary the forces on the passengers. While the examiner offers absolutely no support for this rejection, applicant notes that the Matsui system is incapable of moving lift chairs farther or closer to a central stationary hub because Matsui does not have a central stationary hub. Moreover, operation of ski lifts dictates that the lift chairs each move at the same pace for safety purposes such that there is no need or benefit to vary the forces on

lift chair passengers. The embodiments of the present invention are directed to an amusement ride whereby passengers are seeking a thrill or rush. One way to accomplish the thrill is to move the passenger units along the rotating support arms to change the distance from the central stationary hub thereby altering the rotational forces on the passengers.

For the reasons set forth above, Matsui does not, and cannot, render claims 4, 21 and 29-31 obvious.

b. Claims 5-13, 22-34 and 38

Claims 5-13, 22-34 and 38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application No. 2006/0178221 to Threlkel. For the reasons set forth below, applicant disputes the examiner's position.

Like most roller coasters, the coaster disclosed in Threlkel stops all passenger units during unloading and loading. One of the benefits of the present invention is the fact that the ride can continue while certain passenger units are unloaded and loaded. The unique clutch system as recited in independent claims 5 and 22 allows the unloading and loading while the ride continues for other passenger units. Regarding claim 5, the examiner has failed to identify any language in Threlkel that discloses 1) one or more support arms extending radially relative to a central stationary hub; 2) a rotatable clutch; 3) means for rotating said rotatable member and said rotatable clutch; and 4) one or more transfer units affixed to said rotatable clutch for facilitating transfer of the one or more passenger compartments between the one or more support arms and said central stationary hub during apparatus operation. Regarding claim 22, the examiner has failed to identify any language in Threlkel that discloses 1) first series of tracks extend radially relative to a central stationary hub; 2) said platform positioned adjacent to a rotatable clutch platform having a second series of tracks; and 3) means for rotating said platform and said rotatable clutch platform relative to said central stationary hub to facilitate transfer of the passenger compartments from the platform to a stationary platform.

Like above relative to claims 4 and 21, there is simply no basis to state that it would have been obvious to incorporate a rotatable clutch into the Threlkel roller coaster. First,

there is no reason to do so since they unload and load simultaneously. Second, the rotatable clutch of the present invention functions in conjunction with the support arms which rotate relative to a central stationary hub. Applicant is at a loss to visualize why or how such a clutch system would be implemented into the Threlkel roller coaster.

Claims 29-34 and 38 are directed to moving passenger units farther and closer to a central stationary hub to vary the forces on the passengers. While the examiner offers absolutely no support for this rejection, applicant notes that the Threlkel coaster is incapable of moving passenger units farther or closer to a central stationary hub because Threlkel does not have a central stationary hub. Varying the forces on roller coasters, including the Threlkel coaster, is accomplished with peaks and valleys, turns and twists and altering speeds. To the contrary, the embodiments of the present invention accomplish varying forces by moving the passenger units along the rotating support arms to change the distance from the central stationary hub thereby altering the rotational forces on the passengers.

For the reasons set forth above, Threlkel does not, and cannot, render claims 5-13, 22-34 and 38 obvious.

c. Claims 14-17

Claims 14-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Threlkel in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,149,873 to Potter et al. For the reasons set forth below, applicant disputes the examiner's position.

Applicant acknowledges that Potter discloses a scent apparatus, monitor and sound system but not relative to an amusement ride. Potter fails to disclose means for misting as recited in claim 17. Moreover, the combination of Threlkel and Potter fails to disclose the limitations of independent claim 5 as discussed above.

For the reasons set forth above, the combination of Threlkel and Potter does not, and cannot, render claims 14-17 obvious.

III. Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance and,

accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. Should any questions remain regarding the allowability of the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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